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Law Library Briefs

Roger Williams University School of Law Library



No. 28, March, 2006

LOISLAW!

Students who will be conducting legal research this summer for an attorney or law firm without access to LexisNexis or Westlaw, should not despair! There is Loislaw! Loislaw is a commercial service for legal research. Unlike LexisNexis and Westlaw, R.W.U. law school students conducting research for an attorney or law firm can use Loislaw.

Loislaw offers full-text access to federal and state caselaw, statutes, administrative regulations, and court rules. It is important to note that only the text of the cases and the statutes is provided. The editorial enhancements to cases and statutes available on LexisNexis and on Westlaw are not on Loislaw. You will not find the Westlaw headnotes nor annotations to statutes on Loislaw.

In order to use Loislaw, you must register for individual access at <http://www.loislawschool.com>. At the website's homepage, click on "Register" and complete the online registration form. You will need to enter the law school's special access code which can be obtained by contacting a Reference Librarian.

Loislaw is easy to use. Searching cases and statutes on Loislaw is similar to searching cases and statutes on LexisNexis and on Westlaw. Both keyword and field searching are available. A search can

be conducted using Boolean connectors and word expanders. Words with variant spellings can also be searched. Like LexisNexis and Westlaw, the table of contents of numerous publications can be browsed. Searching a state's administrative code on Loislaw is similar to the cases or statutes on Loislaw.

Two special features of Loislaw are LawWatch and GlobalCite. LawWatch is an electronic notification service similar to LexisNexis's Eclipse and Westlaw's WestClip. Notification is provided to you whenever a document is added to the Loislaw service that satisfies your search criteria. The GlobalCite feature is somewhat akin to Shepard's on LexisNexis and KeyCite on Westlaw. GlobalCite lists all the documents on Loislaw that cite your case, statute or regulation. Terms indicating the courts' treatments of your case are highlighted for easy viewing.

In addition to the primary legal sources, the Loislaw service has some secondary sources. Among them are Aspen Publishing treatises in over two dozen subject areas and bar publications of some states (of note are numerous Massachusetts CLE publications). Access to these secondary sources is not available at www.loislawschool.com. Again, do

not despair! As a result of the Law Library's membership in the New England Law Libraries Consortium (NELLCO), there is access to these secondary sources from any PC in the law library or by using the Library's proxy service on a home PC. To access the treatises and bar publications, select "Online Resources" from the Library's pull-down menu on the law school's website and click on the L.O.I.S. Treatise Libraries link. Click on the blue circles with the "i" for product information about the various treatise libraries. There are options to search individual publications by keyword or browse a table of contents.

If you need help with subscribing to Loislaw or searching any of its contents, please do not hesitate to seek the assistance of a Reference Librarian.



Having Software/Printing Problems? There is help!

If you are experiencing problems with the PC that you are using in the Law Library or your laptop, Phyllis O'Neill is available to assist you with troubleshooting to resolve your problem. Her hours are 8:30 p.m. to 4:30 p.m. Monday through Friday.

Some of the common software problems include viewing a document, printing a document, saving a document to a USB memory stick, and attempting to retrieve lost documents. She does not assist with hardware problems on laptop computers. Some common hardware problems with the PCs in the Law Library involve adjusting the contrast on the monitor and checking for loose wiring if the PC is not functioning properly. For serious problems, Phyllis will contact IT on your behalf! She also assists with clearing paper jams in the printers in any of the system or Lexis/Westlaw printers. **Note**, she hires and supervises the Computer Lab Assistants. So if you are looking for employment in the Law Library and you have some experience in this area, contact Phyllis at x4536 or email poneill@law.rwu.edu.



New Bureau of National Affairs Databases!

The Law Library has recently expanded its offerings of databases from the Bureau of National Affairs (BNA). These databases are accessible from the Law School's home page by clicking the "Online Resources" link from the Library's pull-down menu. The BNA topical databases report on recent agency activities, case decisions, proposed or newly enacted legislation and general developments in specialized areas of law. They are wonderful resources to consult for inspiration if you are looking for a topic for a law review article, course paper or directed research! You can search the individual databases by keyword or you can browse the contents which are updated weekly. The BNA

databases are: ABA/BNA Lawyers' Manual on Professional Conduct; Antitrust & Trade Regulation Report; Criminal Law Reporter; Electronic Commerce and Law Report; Environment Reporter - Current Reports; Family Law Reporter; Health Law Reporter; International Trade Reporter - Current Reports; Labor and Employment Law Library; Patent, Trademark and Copyright Journal; Securities Regulation & Law Report; U.S. Law Week; and U.S. Patents Quarterly/Intellectual Property Library.



Book Review: *Storming the Court* by Thelma Dzialo

Are you so bogged down with school work that you've forgotten why you came to Law School in the first place? Need some inspiration? If so, read *Storming the Court: How a Band of Law Students Sued the President-- and Won* by Brandt Goldstein (KF4836.G65 2005). It's the true story of a group of Yale Law School students and their professors who brought suit against the U.S. government during the 1990s on behalf of Haitian refugees detained at Guantanamo Bay, Cuba. The refugees, who fled their homeland in 1991 after the first military coup that ousted Haitian President Jean-Bertrand Aristide, sought and were denied political asylum by the first Bush administration. They were detained at Guantanamo Bay without access to legal counsel. This book tells the story of their struggle for freedom and of the successful legal challenge waged on their behalf by the Yale law school students and faculty in the U.S. Supreme Court. Spanning both the Bush and Clinton administrations, this book is a timely

and thought provoking read.



Library News

New Microfilm/Microfiche Scanners!

The old microfilm/microfiche readers have been replaced by two new Canon microfilm/microfiche scanners! The scanners are attached to PCs. Installed on the PCs is the operating software, CapturePerfect. The PCs do not have additional functions available such as wordprocessing or internet. The scanner must be turned on before booting up the PC. After you have placed the microfiche or microfilm on the carriage, you select "Scan to Page" from the CapturePerfect software's "File" pull-down menu. There is a zoom feature for enlarging the scanned document. The scanned document may be saved as a .tif, .bmp or .pdf file. We recommend saving the scanned document to .pdf. Selecting "Scan to Batch" from the "File" pull-down menu enables one to save multiple scanned documents to one file rather than each document to its own individual file. As there is no printing capability at the present, the document must be saved to disk, USB memory stick, zip drive, or writable CD.

If you need assistance in using the new scanners, please ask staff at the Circulation Desk or the Librarian on duty at the Reference Desk.

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